

# Shrewsbury School Journal

serving a community of continuous learners

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School calendar, keep one at home and work, see page 4

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## Superintendent's Corner

# Thank you, Shrewsbury!

BY DR. ANTHONY BENT  
SUPERINTENDENT

The opening of the 2002-03 academic year signals a rare event in the life of the town and school district. In just a few days, over 1,600 students in grades 8-12 will resume their education in a wonderful new building. The school is 280,000 sq. ft. in size and state-of-the-art in many ways. It has excellent classroom spaces, a media center of 9,000 sq. ft. (three times the size of the media center of the old high school), several computer laboratories, a language laboratory, capacity for wireless communications, four indoor basketball courts, and a full complement of competition and practice athletic fields.

The community said YES to children and public education when it voted to provide the resources for the new school in 2000. Now the school is a reality and students, parents, teachers, and administrators are grateful for what the town has done. While we witnessed the difficulties surrounding towns faced in gaining sufficient support for schools, Shrewsbury made the commitment and our school is now ready to open. One would be hard pressed to think of a better example of how a community can preserve its quality of life for future generations. The school will provide the opportunity for excellence in education for generations. The entire district is energized with pride at being associated with such a magnificent school facility.

Lest we think that the decision to build the school was anything less than wise from a fiscal standpoint, think of the Floral St. School, opened in 1997, at a cost of \$12.5 million. With a state reimbursement formula of 64% and payments currently from the State of Massachusetts for nearly \$500,000 each year, the cost to the average taxpayer for the school is less than \$30 annually. Even after just five years of operation, the school is already a wise investment for the town. The same will be true for the new high school! With costs continuing to rise and with reimbursement rates from the State less assured than in the past, the \$62 million expenditure (at 64% reimbursement) will also prove itself to be a very prudent action that will provide service to all age groups.

So, thank you, Shrewsbury. Thank you for saying yes to children and public education. Thank you for energizing your school system and those who learn and work in it every day. And congratulations for making such a smart investment.

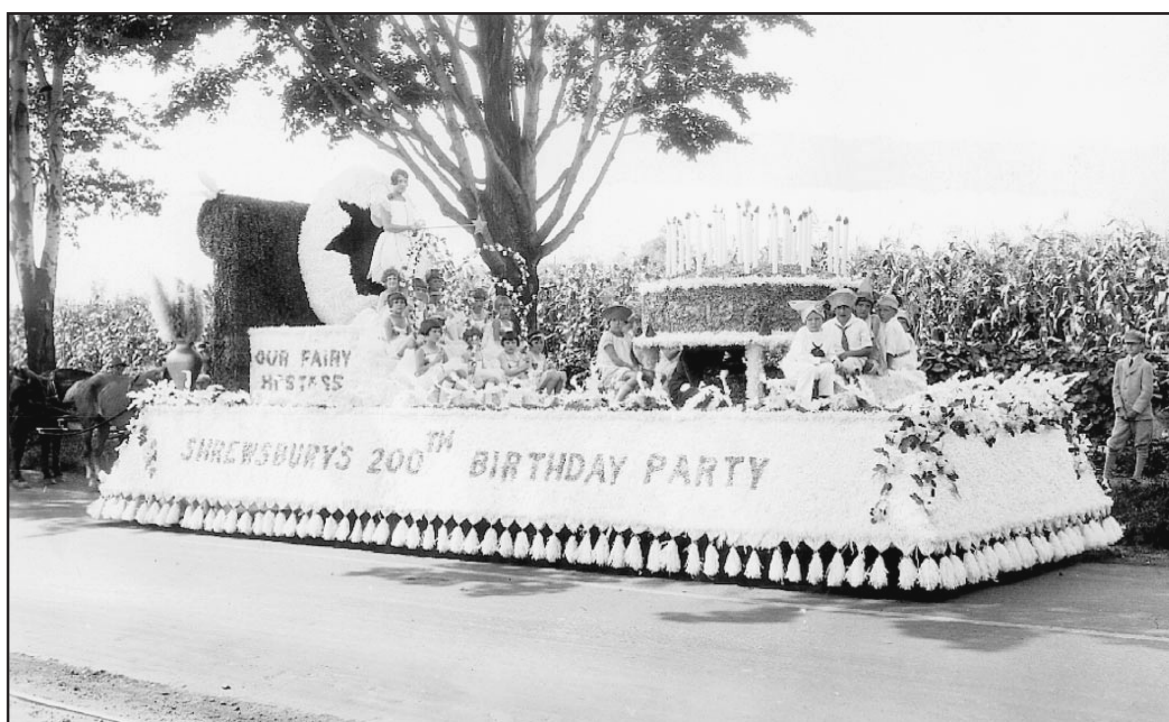
*The Shrewsbury Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.*

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## New administrators

*Educational excellence continues*

## Floating along



SHREWSBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PHOTO

*A parade float moves along Main Street during Shrewsbury's 200th birthday celebration in 1927.*

# High school to open on time

DEBORAH PEEPLES  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER

As we get close to opening the new Shrewsbury High School, I had the opportunity to chat with the Chairman of the Building Committee, Henry Fitzgerald.

Henry and his wife, Jean, have lived in Shrewsbury since 1978. Their two children, Thomas and Colleen, both went through the Shrewsbury school system. Henry's involvement in the community has evolved over the years from work on PTO's and playground committees, to serving as a Town Meeting Member and a member of the Floral Street School Building Committee, to his current appointment three years ago to the High School/Middle School Building Committee. He was elected Chairman of the Committee at their first meeting. A graduate of WPI, Henry is an engineer by training, and is currently the Vice President of Engineering at Genzyme Corporation, where his group oversees all of Genzyme's capital project planning and capital projects.

**Q:** Has this municipal project been very different than construction in the private sector?

**Henry:** We do face many of the same issues, but it is different. Generally speaking in the private sector the architect, engineers and general contractors work together much more as a team. I also tend to

think that there is a little more overall commitment to certain milestones in the construction program.

**Q:** Can you describe some of the key features of the building?

**Henry:** It is a metal and glass building, modern in its appearance. The most remarkable feature of the building is how it is separated into three distinct areas, and that's what I think makes the design so special. At one end there are two three-story academic wings. The central commons area of the school includes the auditorium, cafeteria, seating area, presentation room, music rooms and TV studios. And of course, the large gym and athletic facilities area are at the other end of the school. The three areas are all connected by a common walkway, known as "Main Street".

Some special features in the building include a 9,000 square foot media center and technology throughout the facility including computers ports in every classroom, office space and specialty room. The building includes an 850-seat performing arts auditorium, a smaller 150-seat presentation room, and an expansive gymnasium that includes a specialized flooring system and an indoor track. Some other unique features are the wide corridors that allow easy student passage and the almost 1500 lockers, 4" wider than our current lockers, which will

*Fitzgerald, see page 2*

**"Community members are invited to attend the dedication ceremony on Sunday, September 22, at 2:00 pm."**

Henry Fitzgerald  
BUILDING COMMITTEE

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